

McLane
McLane-Holmes House
Colorado-Concho Rivers Confluence Area
South of Leaday townsite
Voss-Vicinity *Corral Verde*
Concho County
Texas

HAES No. TX-3355

HAES
TEX
48-CONC.V
2-

MEASURED DRAWINGS

~~PHOTOGRAPHS~~

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

~~SKETCHES~~

Historic American Building Survey
National Park Service
Rocky Mountain Regional Office
Department of the Interior
P.O. Box 25287
Denver, Colorado 80225

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY
McLANE-HAFNER HOUSE ~~HOUSE~~ ^{RANCH}

HABS
TEX
482 CONC. 1/2
2-

PART I. INTRODUCTION

Location: Located on the west side of the Colorado River, 2.7 miles south of Leaday townsite, .7 miles west of the confluence of Elm Creek and the Colorado River, .4 miles south of the Colorado River, Concho County, State of Texas

USGS Leaday Quadrangle, Universal Transverse Mercator Coordinates: 14.436394.3490462

Present Owner: James Hafner; permanent easement granted to the Colorado River Municipal Water District, Big Spring, Texas

Present Occupant: Demolished, summer, 1989

Significance: The first (or 1886) phase of the McLane-Hafner house is architecturally significant as an example of a vernacular stylistic type typical in the region, a one-and-one-half-story stone structure of the I-house type configuration with steeply-pitched rooflets over the three half floor windows on the main facade. The stone was no doubt quarried on the site as was the case at a number of similar sites in the vicinity. It is important because of its climatic adaptation and site orientation, the use of local building stone, and its function as the nucleus for a large complex of outbuildings serving one of the oldest ranches in the area. It is culturally significant because of its associations with the early settling and ranching family of McLane. The expansion of the house and the ranch outbuildings complex and their evolution under the later Hafner ownership in the second half of the twentieth century are equally important as a presentation of a working cattle and sheep ranch for a period of more than a century, continuing until the late 1980s.

PART II. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

A. Physical History:

1. Date of erection: 1886. The date is scratched on a datestone to the lower righthand side of the central south doorway. This date is supported by tradition. A sizeable expansion was made to the house in the period 1943-cl960.
2. Original and subsequent owners: The site is located on land which was patented in 1850 as the Blasius Albrecht Survey. It passed into the ownership of Gustav Schleicher some time before 1868 and in that year into the McLane ownership. Reference is to Deed volumes, Concho County Courthouse, Paint Rock, unless otherwise noted.

1868	28 December 1868, B:235, Gus Schleicher to William McLane [Sr.]
1872	7 March 1872, B:241, Deed of Gift, William McLane [Sr.] to William J. McLane [Jr.]
1923	17 May 1923, 25:173, Alberta McLane to M. H. Witt
1943	21 January 1943, 56:147, M. H. Witt and wife to R. A. Hafner
1983	27 April 1983, 652:27, R. A. Hafner to James A. Hafner
1988	142:682-684, James A. Hafner and Martha Hafner to Colorado River Municipal Water District
3. Builder: The original 1886 nucleus of the house possibly can be attributed to stonemason Jonathan Cook, a native of Ireland, whose related work is the Rich Coffey house, dated 1881 (HABS No. TX-3354), located at the confluence of the Concho and Colorado Rivers. Other stone ranch houses related to the McLane-Hafner house and possibly works of Cook are the Ransbarger house, located in Runnels County; and the Creswell-Rozzle house, dated 1880, located across the Colorado River in Coleman County (HABS No. TX-3352). See the Rich Coffey discussion regarding Jonathan Cook.
4. Original plans and construction: No original drawings have come to light; it is unlikely that any were ever produced for a vernacular structure of this sort. The house was built in two phases, the first dated with a scratched datestone ("1886"); the second begun in the mid-1940s following the

Hafner purchase. Hafner family photographs document almost every phase of this latter work, beginning with images of the old house as it existed before any alterations were made. Both phases of construction, the nineteenth-century main unit and the twentieth-century additions and changes remained in a relatively unchanged state until their demolition.¹

5. Alterations and additions: The first unit to be constructed, that is, the 1886 stone I-house, always retained its original orientation to the south and its basic configuration. In the post-1943 building phase the house was partially engulfed by a massive modern porch across its entrance facade and by a series of additional rooms and porches in a new shed construction across the entire rear face of the house. The upper half-story had never been partitioned, remaining one long room until the 1940s; at this time it was divided into a passage with rooms to either side and a new bathroom was placed at the northern end of this new passage.

Other changes made in the post-1943 phase were the blocking-in of the fireplace in the west room and alterations to several door and window openings and repointing of the masonry for a large expanse of the exterior walls.

The original stairs rose from the south along the righthand wall of the downstairs central passage. During the post-1943 alterations this staircase was removed and realigned along the same wall, but this time to rise from the north end of the passage.

A two-room woodframe ell structure, originally attached to the north wall of the original house, on axis with the central passage, was removed when the new stone shed addition was constructed. This structure was moved to a location northeast of the house and functioned as an outbuilding until its destruction during the demolition of the structures on the site in 1989.

B. Historical Context:

For the general historical overview which places the property in the context of the development of cattle ranching at the confluence of the Colorado and Concho Rivers, please see HABS No. TX-3350.

The land for the present-day McLane-Hafner ranch was assembled from the large Albrecht grant, originally one of the Fisher-Miller Colony tracts, by William J. McLane, Sr., in 1868. McLane had been a prominent member of the Gutierrez-Magee Expedition of 1812-1813, a filibustering expedition against Spanish Texas which failed but

intensified interest in the Anglo-American settlement of Texas.² One of his sons, Hiram H. McLane, owned the ranch which became the Alamo Heights subdivision in San Antonio.³ Another son, William J. McLane, Jr., born in Indiana in 1829, was set up in a ranching enterprise in Karnes County, but eventually moved to Concho County to the former Albrecht-Schleicher lands which he received from his father in 1872.⁴ The younger William McLane occupied his new land sometime in the period 1872-1880, as he is listed in the Concho County Census of 1880; the entry lists also three sons and two workers, which seems to suggest a settled sort of occupancy.⁵ Ruins of his first house still exist near the Colorado River at a site some distance to the north of the present complex.⁶

William McLane began his stone I-house in 1886. The construction of a new house on the McLane Ranch may have been a response to the stone Creswell house constructed in 1880 directly across the river at the Creswell's Bend Ranch (HABS No. TX-3352). As mentioned, the McLane house bears a relationship to other contemporary structures in the neighborhood attributed to the stonemason Jonathan Cook. However, the new McLane house has a much closer stylistic relationship to another Concho County house, the stone-constructed Silver Cliff Ranch house built in 1882-1883 for John Loomis.⁷ Loomis's ranch was twelve miles west of Paint Rock and was constructed by a Paint Rock stonemason, Jack Carroll, and the carpenters were also from that town. The Loomis house was a story-and-a-half, of the vernacular I-house type with a plan similar to the McLane house consisting of a passageway with a room to either side on each floor. The Loomis fireplaces were also in the end walls; a porch extended across the rear of the house with one end enclosed as a kitchen. Each of the upstairs windows in the half-story windows, which projected above the eave almost like dormers, were covered with small steeply-pitched gables. The interior walls were plastered and covered with calico. Loomis also built a huge stone barn, forty feet wide and one hundred feet long. The lumber for the Silver Creek building projects was hauled from Abilene. The interior walls of the Loomis house were plastered and covered with calico, whereas the McLane interior walls were left rough, unplastered, and the entire upper floor was unpartitioned until the post-1943 alterations.

The McLane Ranch remained in the McLane family ownership until it was sold by a descendant in 1943 to R. A. Hafner. Hafner engaged in raising cattle and sheep and cultivating crops of oats. He raised cotton for one year only. He installed a water pump on the river, a similar device to those installed at the Gann and Day-Miller Ranches nearby. Hafner began the above-mentioned changes and alterations to the stone house in 1943 and continued this project throughout the 1950s.⁸ The ranch was deeded to Hafner's son, James Hafner, in 1983. James Hafner granted permanent easement to the

Colorado River Municipal Water District in 1988.

In 1979 the Texas Water Commission granted permission to the Colorado River Municipal Water District, an entity based in Big Spring, to construct a large dam on the Colorado River. The site chosen was a location several miles downstream from Leaday, sixteen miles below the confluence of the Colorado and Concho Rivers. Early in the planning stages, a program was developed to address environmental concerns, including the impact of the proposed flood area on prehistoric and historic cultural resources. In 1980-1981 a survey of historic cultural resources was conducted by Freeman and Freeman under contract to Espey, Huston and Associates, a firm of Austin environmental consultants. Subsequently a number of other studies and amplifications of previous studies have been conducted. In early 1988 an Albuquerque, New Mexico, firm of environmental scientists, Mariah Associates, Inc., began further assessment of the area of the flood plain, including various archaeological investigations and assessments. Mariah has also acted in the role of coordinator of related projects, including this project: the recordation of nineteen endangered historic sites in the confluence area for the Historic American Buildings Survey and the Historic American Engineering Record. The sites were selected from a list compiled under the guidance of the Texas Historical Commission. Construction was finished on the dam in the late summer of 1989. Called the Stacy Dam and Reservoir, the project will inundate approximately 19,200 acres, and possibly the McLane Ranch. The McLane-Hafner house was demolished in June 1989, a few days before the HABS documentation team arrived on the site.

PART III. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

A. General Statement:

1. Architectural character: Constructed on a wide flat plain above the Colorado River, this late nineteenth-century vernacular limestone ranch house was the center for a sizeable complex of secondary structures of various materials. The height of its stone walls, the steeply pitched gables of the rooflets over each of the upper windows of the second floor, the massive scale of the piers of its modern south porch made it the most prominent element in the landscape for many miles around.

2. Condition of the fabric: Before its demolition in the summer of 1989, the exterior stone masonry was sound, the roof in good condition, the interiors relatively intact. It had been dismantled to the level of the tops of the first floor windows a few days before the measurement and photographic survey began.

B. Description of Exterior:

1. Overall dimensions: The one-and-one-half-story original structure had a full basement room occupying a space under the east first floor room. The rectangular original structure was approximately 50 feet across and 20 feet deep. The long shed addition across the north face of the house was approximately 10 feet wide. The south porch addition was approximately 30 feet across and 11 feet deep, centered on the old central doorway (HABS photos TX-3355-A-1 to A-7).
2. Foundations: The house had no watertable, but the basement walls were thicker than the house walls by about 6 inches to the interior walls of the space, suggesting that type of footing around the perimeter walls of the house at a certain level below grade.
3. Wall construction: Exterior walls above the basement level were approximately 18 inches thick. The limestone masonry was of good craftsmanship, joints raised and scored, with stone lintels and stone sills at each opening.
4. Structural system, framing: The ceiling joists were 2-inch by 4-inch oak members, as were the rafters.
5. Porches: The one-story south entrance porch, dating from the post-1943 changes and additions, was centered on the old south doorcase, with four large columns, 30 inches square, giving the appearance of massive masonry or even concrete piers; they were in fact framed, with 1-inch-thick finish boards, plastered and painted; they were later reinforced on their north faces with concrete masonry strips. The upper register of the porch was decked and railed with wooden cross-bracing to provide a wide balcony opening off an upper central door. During demolition, when the porch floor had been removed, the "1886" datestone was revealed, located in a masonry course to the lower jamb of the old central doorcase.

It is important to note that the original south entrance may never have had a covered porch. During demolition iron straps above the old central door were uncovered, provisions by the stonemason for a porch roof or balcony; but no such element

seems to have been built, despite the fact of a central doorcase located in the story above. At any rate, no such porch or balcony existed when the house was purchased by the Hafner family in 1943. (For a similar situation of a planned porch or upper balcony never materializing see the north elevation of the 1893 wing of the Creswell-Rozzle house [HABS No. TX-3352]).

The porch occupying the northeast corner of the Hafner period shed addition across the north face of the original house was approximately 10 feet by 22 feet, fitted with insect screening.

6. Chimneys: In the original stone house there were fireplaces in the two lower rooms with stove flues in the corresponding upper end walls of the long room above. The lower east room firebox was of the exterior type with the stack rising on the outside wall to a height of three courses above the roof, capped with a simple stone cap. The west room firebox was blocked during the Hafner changes; it had been constructed in the body of the wall and its chimneystack rose within the west end wall itself, brought to the same height as the east stack.

During the post-1943 Hafner changes, a new stone fireplace was constructed for the room occupying the northwest corner of the shed addition which was built across the north face of the original house; the new firebox was constructed to the exterior of the west face of this one-story addition and its stack rose only two or three courses above its sloping shed roof.

7. Openings: In most cases, the sizes of door and window openings throughout the house were changed in the post-1943 alterations. Some 4-over-4 double-hung sashes survived.

8. Roof:

- a. Shape, covering: The roof of the original one-and-one-half-story house was a simple gabled roof with steeply-pitched rooflets over each of the three upper openings of the south elevation. In recent times the original wood shingles were replaced by a covering of asphalt shingles.
- b. Cornice: The original cornice-eave treatment did not survive the post-1943 Hafner changes. What replaced it was a simple boxed-eave treatment with 1-inch by 12-inch raking pieces for the rooflets of the upper south openings.

C. Description of Interior:

1. Floor plans:

- a. Basement: There was a full height basement under the east room of the original stone house, entered from the exterior from a long flight of stone steps from the north wall, this flight retained by stone walls. Its function always seems to have been for storage only. The masonrywork was squared local stone set in a sandy low-lime mortar, the joints raised and scored.
 - b. First floor: In the original configuration there were two almost square stone-walled rooms arranged symmetrically to either side of a central stairs passage. A wide south entrance porch was added during the post-1943 Hafner changes. Also part of the Hafner alterations was the stone-constructed shed addition across the entire north face of the old house. This new shed arrangement contained a screened porch in the northeast corner. A new bathroom was located in the center of the shed aligned to the rear doorway of the old stairs passage. A new bedroom with a new exterior fireplace was located in the northwest corner, and a short narrow passageway between the new bedroom and bathroom led to a further extension to the north, a small nub added as a new north entrance and also functioning as a laundry.
 - c. Second floor: In the original phase of construction the upper floor was not partitioned, remaining one long half-story room with an open stairwell in its center. There were no fireplaces in its end walls; rather, stove flues were let into these walls. During the post-1943 Hafner changes, the stairs were realigned to rise to the south; east and west rooms were partitioned off the create a central passage to correspond to the passage below, and a portion of the north end of the new upper passage was further partitioned off and fitted out as a bathroom.
2. Stairways: The original stairs rose from the south along the righthand wall of the downstairs central passage. During the Hafner alterations this staircase was removed and realigned along the same wall, but this time to rise from the north end of the passage. Both old and new staircases were very steeply rising; their alignments were visible as shadowlines during the demolition of the structure.

3. Flooring: All original flooring was replaced during the post-1943 Hafner changes and replaced by tongue-and-grooved hardwood flooring.
4. Wall finish: Originally the walls of the spaces within the original stone house were left naked stone, very rough, as was the case in at least two other contemporary stone houses in the vicinity, namely the Rich Coffey house (HABS No. TX-3354) and the Creswell-Rozzle house (HABS No. TX-3352). During the Hafner alteration period they were given a coat of hard cement plaster and wallpapered.
5. Decorative features: No decorative features survived the demolition period in 1989. Judging from contemporary evidence at other sites nearby, there probably was nothing in the way of carved mantelpieces or molded door and window enframements.
6. Heating: In the configuration of the house as it was functioning c1960 there were fireplaces in the old downstairs east room and the new northwest shed room and woodstoves in the old west room downstairs and in the newly partitioned east and west rooms in the half-story above.

D. Site:

1. General setting: The house faced south toward the long approach road which wound across the wide flat plain above the Colorado River; the river is to the north and bends sharply to the west; ruins of the first McLane house and stone corrals are located to the north and west of the present structures.

2. Outbuildings:

Ell: At some early stage of development, there was a small ell structure attached to the rear or northwest face of the main house, probably functioning as a kitchen wing. In the post-1943 alterations, this structure was removed to a location northeast of the house complex and demolished in the summer of 1989 before the arrival of the HABS survey team. This structure was woodframe, covered in board-and-batten siding, with a central brick chimneystack.

Cool house: A much-altered outbuilding approximately 14 feet directly north of the northeast corner of the main house existed there when the Hafners purchased the place. It is approximately 13 feet wide and 18 feet long (HABS photos TX-3355-B-1 and B-2). It probably functioned as a cool house for the storage of perishable foodstuffs. It is constructed of stone, stuccoed, with a composition roof. Two paired windows

in the infilled north end were in place in 1943; it has a stone floor; the wide south opening is insect screened.

Storm cellar: Approximately 25 feet northwest of the house is a cast-concrete storm cellar, approximately 8 feet square.

Water tower: Approximately 50 feet north of the house is the concrete frame, approximately 12 feet square, for a metal water tank, since dismantled.

Chicken house: Approximately 100 feet northwest of the house is a chickenyard and stone chicken house, approximately 10 feet by 12 feet; the Hafners also used this structure as a hog pen. It was constructed in the early 1950s and is very similar to the chicken house at the Coffey Ranch (HABS No. TX-3354).

Various sheds north of the house, a barn northeast of the house, a modern garage east of the house, and other small structures were demolished in the late 1980s, before the arrival of the survey team.

3. Landscaping, enclosures: There are existing fragments of stone corrals and later animal enclosures scattered around the ranch and in the vicinity of the house and outbuildings complex, but the enclosure of the immediate house compound and several of the shade trees planted during the Hafner occupation were destroyed during the 1989 demolition. Hafner family photographs document many of the demolished outbuildings as well as a cross-braced wooden fence enclosing the immediate house compound and dating from the post-1943 period.

Prepared by:
Gus Hamblett,
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September 1989

PART IV. ENDNOTES

1. Interview with James Hafner, Gouldbusk, Texas, 22 June 1989; interview by Gus Hamblett. Photographs taken in the period 1940s-1989 were provided by James Hafner; see also a photograph of the frame ell in its new location, taken before its demolition in 1989, in Martha Doty Freeman and Joe C. Freeman, A Cultural Resource Inventory of the Proposed Stacy Reservoir, Concho, Coleman and Runnels Counties, Texas, vol. II: Historical Cultural Resources, report prepared for the Colorado River Municipal Water District by Espey, Huston and Associates, Inc., Engineering and Environmental Consultants (Austin, Texas, March 1981), 9-16.

2. Walter Prescott Webb and H. Bailey Carroll, eds., The Handbook of Texas, vol. I, (Austin, Texas: Texas State Historical Association, 1952), 749-751.

3. Freeman, 5-4.

4. Ibid.

5. Hazie Davis LeFevre, Concho County History 1858-1958, (Eden, Texas, March 1959), 14.

6. Freeman, 5-6.

7. The Silver Cliff Ranch house information is from the very detailed building data recorded in Herman J. Viola and Sarah Loomis Wilson, editors, Texas Ranchman: the Memoirs of John A. Loomis, (Chadron, Nebraska: Fur Press, 1982), 14-19. For an early photograph of the Loomis house, see "Overview History of the Confluence of the Colorado and Concho Rivers," HABS No. TX-3350.

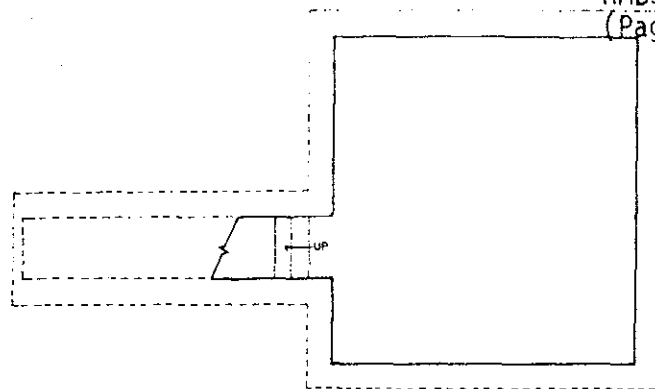
8. The information regarding the ranching activities of R. A. Hafner and the numerous changes he made to the house and outbuildings in the period 1943-1960 was supplied by his son, James Hafner. A copy of an aerial view of the house compound, a c1988 photograph provided by James Hafner, is attached.

PART V. SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

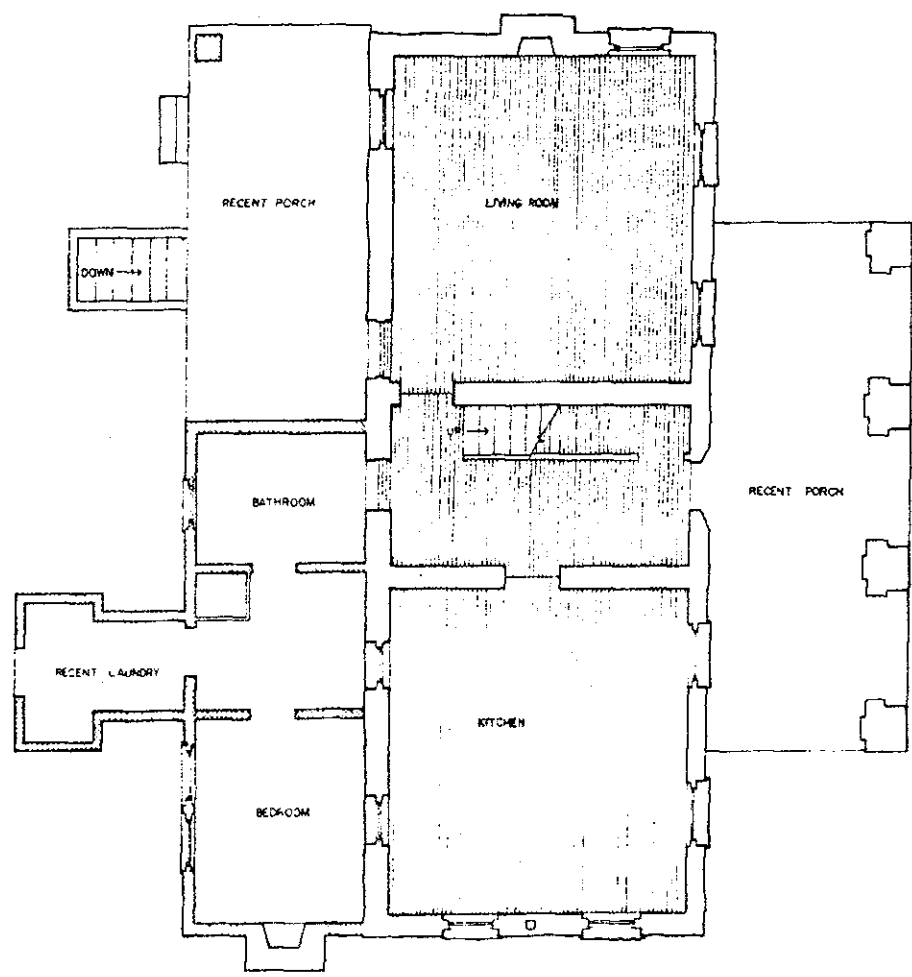
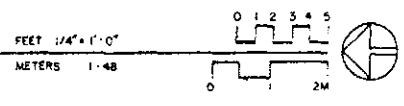
Sketch floor plans, first and second floors

PART VI. PROJECT INFORMATION

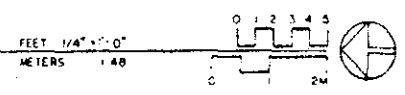
This project was sponsored by Mariah Associates, Inc., archaeologists; recorded under the supervision of Greg Kendrick, HABS regional coordinator, Denver. The project was completed during the summer of 1989 at the project field office at Houston and College Station, Texas. Project supervisor was Graham B. Luhn, A.I.A., architect; project architectural historian was Gus Hamblett, Texas A&M University; intern architects were Debbie Fernandez and Paul Neidinger; student architects were Brian Dougan, Robert Holton, Janna Johnson, Wayne Jones, and Pat Sparks, Texas A&M University; project photographer was Paul Neidinger, photographic processing by Laura McFarlane.

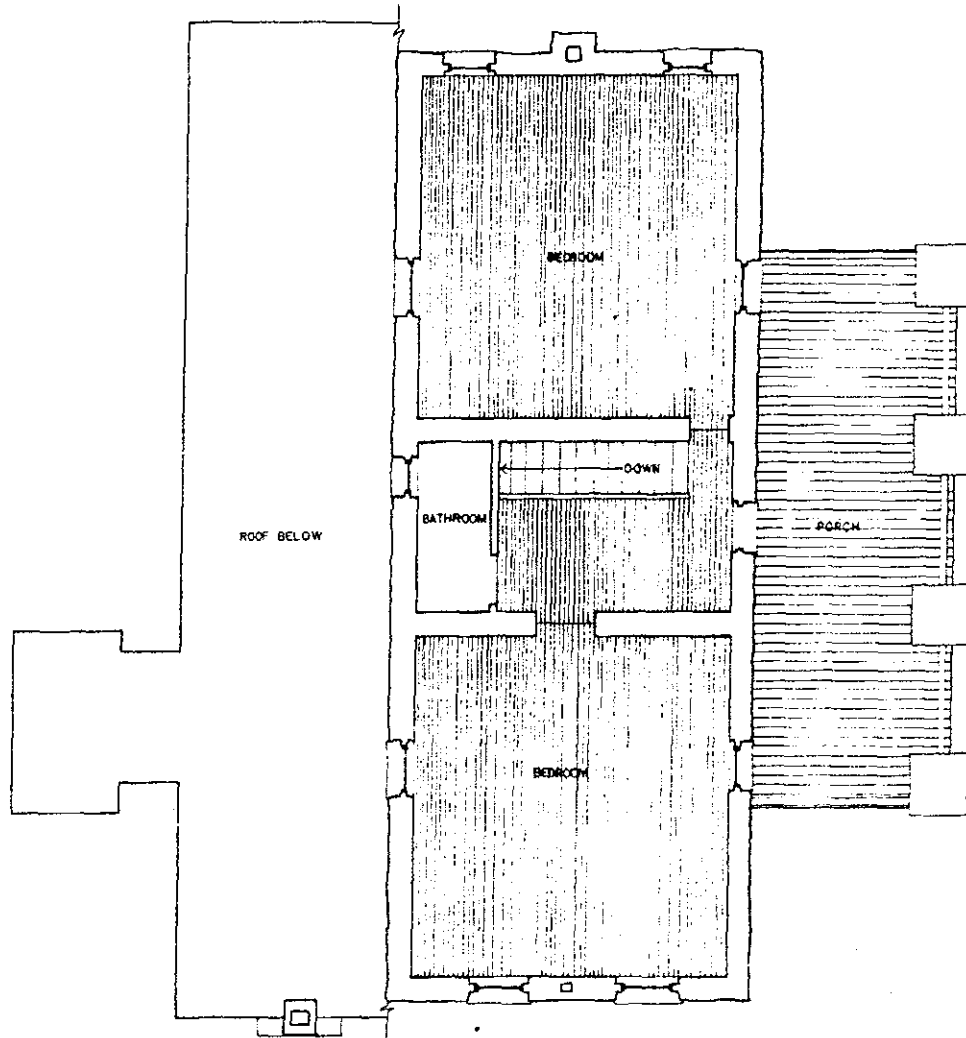


CELLAR PLAN



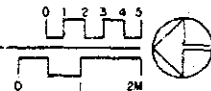
GROUND FLOOR PLAN





SECOND FLOOR PLAN

FEET 1/4" = 1'-0"
METERS 1:48



VOSS VICINITY

McLANE HAFNER HOUSE
CONCHO COUNTY

TX
3355

